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SUBJECT: JUNE 8 MILITARY/SECURITY AND DISPLACED PERSONS
REPORT

REF: ISLAMABAD 1246

Classified By: Anne W. Patterson for reasons 1.4 (b), (d).

11. (U) SUMMARY: During the evening of June 6 a suicide bomber and accomplices attacked a police post in Islamabad. The blast killed three police and injured several others. Police claimed taking three accomplices of the bomber into custody. Also that evening, two detained top aides to militant leader Sufi Mohammad were killed when the military convoy in which they were riding was attacked by militants in a remote area of Malakand. A taliban spokesman rebutted the official story and blamed the government for their deaths. Local villagers in Upper Dir took matters into their own hands in response to the bombing of a mosque on June 5. Over the weekend, hundreds of locals banded together in a lashkar and attacked five villages known to harbor taliban militants. Consulate Peshawar reports on actions by militants, including torching of schools and assassinations.

12. (U) As of June 5, the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) had verified as legitimate approximately 1.73 million registered internally displaced persons based on a family size of seven. The numbers are not yet final. NADRA has disallowed 164,738 households, or approximately 1.15 million people. The Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees notes, however, the importance first of rapid initial registration to ensure immediate humanitarian relief, followed by re-verification to eliminate duplication and wasted resources. Save the Children estimates that twelve percent of displaced people have not registered. By June 8 there will be 33 operational humanitarian hubs. The humanitarian assistance community is suggesting the need for an independent verification of security before IDP return. Hosting families continue to make an enormous sacrifice and face severe overcrowding and sanitation problems in hosting the displaced. END SUMMARY

MILITARY/SECURITY UPDATE

13. (U) Major events over the weekend were the suicide bomber attack against a police post in Islamabad, the deaths of two top aides to militant leader Sufi Mohammad while in military custody in what has been described as a taliban ambush on a government forces' convoy, and the attacks by a local militia on militants in Upper Dir in response to the bombing of a

mosque on June 5 that killed and injured dozens. The June 6 evening bombing in the capital killed three police and injured several others. The bomber was described as a male in his early twenties of whom very little was left after the blast. Police said that one accomplice had been wounded and apprehended on the spot; two others were reported to have been arrested later. Interior Minister Rehman Malik said the attack was in response to the Swat operation. He added that the government had intelligence that 50 suicide bombers had been ordered into Islamabad by Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan leader Baitullah Mehsud. Malik claimed that eight have already been arrested.

¶4. (U) Also on Saturday evening, two detained top aides to militant leader Sufi Mohamamad were killed when the military convoy in which they were riding was attacked by taliban militants. The deputy chief of the banned Tehrik Nifaz-i-Shariat Muhammadi (TNSM) organization, Maulana Mohammad Alam, and the organization's spokesman, Amir Izzat, were being transported to Peshawar when, according to military spokesman Major General Athar Abbas, an IED explosion ripped through their vehicle in a remote area of Malakand. A soldier was also reported killed in the ensuing gun battle. The bodies of the deceased militants were turned over to a tribal delegation from Amandara, where TNSM is headquartered. MG Abbas told the press that IED incidents are regular occurrences in the area but that the possibility that the two militants were "specifically targetted" could not be ruled out. Abbas acknowledged that another TNSM leader, Maulana Wahab, is in custody. Contesting the

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official story, Muslim Khan, the spokesman for Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) in Swat, blamed the government for killing the two TNSM leaders.

¶5. (U) The June 5 bombing of a mosque in Upper Dir that killed over three dozen people and injured many others provoked a sudden and furious reaction against the taliban by local villagers. Hundreds of them banded together in a militia (a "lashkar") and attacked five villages in the Dhok Darra area that were known as militant strongholds. June 8 press reports claimed that the militia had taken over three villages and were working on pushing the militants out of the other two. Thirteen taliban were said to have been killed. Taliban safehouses were torched by the lashkar. News broadcasts on June 8 showed dozens of locals riding in convoys and brandishing rifles, RPGs and other weapons. One newspaper reported that this was the latest evidence of growing anti-taliban sentiment in Pakistan, a shift that comes in the wake of suicide attacks by militants in response to the military operation against them.

¶6. (U) Consulate Peshawar reports that even as Federal Minister for States and Frontier Regions Najmuddin Khan was saying that militants are "on the run," Consulate contacts pointed to signs that militants are regrouping. In Lower Dir, militants burned seven government schools on June 7, and they burned another in Buner on June 8. Militants in the Kanju area of central Swat kidnapped two brothers and a nephew of Dr. Shamsher Ali, an ANP-affiliated member of the NWFP Assembly; the nephew and a police official were killed. As fighting intensified in Shangla District, residents complained of continuous curfews and the closing of banks and government offices for over a month. Shangla District Coordination Officer Altaf Hussain ordered government servants to report to duty, but the curfew prevented the officials from going to work.

¶7. (U) In Buner, a Consulate contact in the local government confirmed that most government departments in Buner had at least a skeleton staff present, and that health, education and revenue departments were in full operation. Pakistan's Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA) had workers in place and had partly restored power to the areas around the district headquarters of Daggar. Telephone connections were

still down but repair work was underway. In the more recently cleared Pir Baba area of northern Buner, however, no government personnel were yet present.

¶18. (U) Political parties continued to take divergent positions on military operations in Malakand. Ulema (religious scholars) met in Islamabad, hosted by Jamiat Ahl-i-Sunnat Pakistan, to issue a statement of support for current military operations. Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, leader of the opposition in the National Assembly and PML-N party member, condemned suicide attacks but did not take a clear position in support of the operation in Malakand. In Islamabad, Liaquat Ali, Secretary General of the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI), alleged that the Zardari government failed to provide relief to IDPs, while in Karachi JI organized a rally of schoolchildren chanting "Go, America, go" to protest Pakistan's military operation in Malakand.

Humanitarian Coordination

¶19. (U) During a June 6 meeting in Peshawar between the USAID Disaster Assistance Management Team (DART) staff, UN cluster leads, and UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) representatives, UN staff reported that UN interventions and coordination have primarily focused on official camps. UN representatives reported that contingency planning is ongoing for the upcoming monsoon season, as well as for the possible IDP outflow from other geographic displacements.

¶10. (U) As of June 5, the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) had verified approximately 1.73 million

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registered internally displaced persons based on a family size of seven. OCHA indicated that the numbers are not yet final due to a backlog of registration forms, and a GOP-managed grievance process for disqualified households.

¶11. (U) As of June 6, NADRA had disallowed 164,738 households, or approximately 1.15 million people. OCHA reported that 23,278 households had invalid computerized national identity cards (CNICs); 22,993 households did not previously possess CNICs; 101,617 households were registered at multiple sites; 757 households had unclear national ID cards; 1,281 households reported addresses outside of conflict-affected areas; and 14,812 households were duplicate registrations by multiple members of a household.

¶12. (U) In a discussion with Refcoor of the ongoing verification of IDP numbers, Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Representative Guebre-Christos highlighted the importance first of rapid initial registration to ensure immediate humanitarian relief, followed by re-verification to eliminate duplication and wasted resources. Save the Children estimates, based on a recent assessment, that despite duplicate registrations, still some 12 percent of legitimate IDPs have not registered.

Requirements for IDP Return

¶13. (C) In a recent discussion with emboffs, international organization and NGO representatives have stressed that people do not trust the Pakistan military's assessment of the security situation in the affected areas. The humanitarian assistance community is suggesting the need for an independent verification of security before IDP return. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs Head Bessler has noted that this independent verification should be made based on clear criteria and then be broadly communicated to the IDPs. OCHA and others have noted that an area deemed by the military to be "clear" still requires law enforcement, electricity, water, health facilities, civil administration and removal of unexploded ordnance to permit

resumption of civilian life. IDPs also fear that they will be forced to forego the government-promised 25,000 rupees per family if they return home. OCHA has emphasized that the displaced need information that once registered they remain eligible to receive this cash grant even if they return home.

¶14. (SBU) Civil administration officials have generally not yet returned to the affected areas. The International Rescue Committee and Sarhad Rural Support Program have stressed to embassy officers and Washington visitors, however, that for the majority of non-urban displaced, who previously had neither civil administration nor municipal services, the primary criteria for return are credible verification of security and a faith in the government to continue to ensure that security.

IDP Hosting Communities

¶15. (U) As UNHabitat has recently emphasized to emboffs, the tremendous sacrifice the often very poor Pakistani host families are making cannot be overestimated. There is massive overcrowding in hosting communities. Sanitation is a critical issue. While there was limited sanitation in these host communities before, with the influx of displaced families, a house and surrounding property now often holds several times the number of people living there previously.

Food and Nutrition

¶16. (U) As of June 7, the UN World Food Program (WFP) reported 28 currently operational humanitarian hubs. WFP is planning to open five additional hubs in Mardan District on June 8. Food distribution coverage in Mardan District, currently at 73 percent of registered IDPs, will improve with

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the additional hubs.

¶17. (U) As of June 7, WFP reported that food distribution coverage of registered IDPs in the other four districts in North West Frontier Province (NWFP) was 96 percent in Charsadda District, 102 percent in Nowshera District, 106 percent in Peshawar District, and 107 percent in Swabi District. According to WFP, coverage is greater than 100 percent in some districts due to people traveling to several hubs to register and collect rations. WFP expects that the verified IDP registration lists provided by NADRA will largely rectify the problem.

Logistics and Relief Commodities

¶18. (SBU) USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives has provided 20 generators and 20 transformers to local officials for use in IDP camps throughout NWFP. In addition, USAID/OTI has provided to the government 500 out of 1,400 planned non-food item kits for distribution in Jalala camp, Mardan District, and is procuring 200 water cooler storage tanks for distribution to IDP camps. These donations respond directly to previous requests from the GOP. Henceforth, USAID/OTI intends to focus its targeted assistance on hosted IDPs and their hosting communities and on returns.

PATTERSON